

March 11, 1997

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**SUBJECT: Deputy Secretary's Focus Report**

The following is a brief summary of Department of Transportation events and items of interest from the past month:

### **OPERATIONAL ITEMS:**

#### **WSDOT WORKING TO INTEGRATE ENVIRONMENTAL/PLANNING DECISIONS**

Planning staff have been holding discussions with Environmental Affairs regarding integration of environmental review early in the planning process. In that light, these offices recently met with other state and federal agencies (FHWA, EPA, Fish and Wildlife) to work on an agreement to integrate the environmental review process - specifically wetland permitting - into the planning process.

This effort is a component of the direction to integrate environmental decisions with planning decisions. Discussions will continue until consensus is reached on how to best accomplish this task. The drafting of a merger document will follow.

#### **NEW METHOD FOR RANKING INTERSECTIONS AVAILABLE**

The report *Method for Prioritizing Intersection Improvements* was received and expands the current intersection Priority Array methodology used by WSDOT to include intersection improvements beyond the need for signalization. The benefits of this new system are that it is an objective ranking of intersections against others and it is easy to use. It requires data that are easily obtainable from resources available at most traffic offices.

#### **REPORT WILL BE HELD TO ADDRESS PEDESTRIAN COLLISIONS**

A final draft of the report on statewide pedestrian collisions for the years 1990-95 was circulated for comments. The report, similar to one released last year on bicycle collisions, will be used by state and local jurisdictions as a tool to better identify and address these types of collisions.

#### **WSDOT TAKING A CLOSE LOOK AT PAVEMENT**

The Data Collection Branch has begun Pavement Evaluation, which will last approximately three months. The training classes have already been held and there will be four, two-

person crews rating the pavement. The Pavement Survey will study the condition of state highways statewide, and results will be turned over to the Materials Lab for analysis.

#### **WSDOT NOW OFFERS DATA FORM ON INTERNET SITE**

The annual request for data from local agencies has been mailed out. New this year is the ability for agencies to fill out the data form electronically at the WSDOT Internet Site, in lieu of completing and returning the paper form.

#### **WAKE PATTERN TO BE THE SUBJECT OF AERIAL PHOTO SHOOT**

Washington State Ferries has asked Aerial to perform a unique photo mission that will allow Ferries to measure the wake pattern of their only high-speed ferry. This will assist in establishing the optimum operating speeds of this catamaran design in Puget Sound waters.

#### **UPDATED MAP TO INCLUDE PREVIOUS OMITIONS**

A new statewide Global Information System (GIS) base map at 1:500,000 scale was created, updating the 1994 version and including many couplets, spurs, and "Y" connections previously omitted. This map will be included in the next release of the GIS data.

#### **CONTRACT ADS & AWARDS**

January 1997 bids were opened on four preservation projects for a total of four new contracts. The total engineer's estimate was \$6,237,096.57, with total bids of \$5,594,265.83, or 10.31 percent below the estimate. There were 211 uncompleted contracts with a total work-in-progress dollar value of \$1,080,657,192.98.

#### **WSDOT PARTNERING WITH PUBLIC WORKS IN FACILITY USE**

WSDOT met with Public Works officials at Richland and Kennewick to begin the process of developing a joint-use vector dewatering facility for use by the WSDOT Pasco Maintenance personnel. The facility is tentatively being sited at the now-under-construction, Richland Public Works Maintenance facility, adjacent to SR 182 at Kennedy Drive. A meeting was also held with Public Works officials of Centralia, Chehalis and Lewis County to solicit interest in a joint-use vector dewatering facility for use by the WSDOT Chehalis Maintenance personnel. This process will proceed with the evaluation of possible sites.

#### **NEW FIRST AVENUE SOUTH BRIDGE NOW SERVING MOTORISTS**

The newly built First Avenue South Bridge in Seattle opened to traffic Sunday, Feb. 2. Measuring 294 feet long, 60 feet wide and 26 feet high, the bridge is the third longest double-leaf bascule bridge in the country. Its immense hydraulic cylinders rotate leaves weighing almost 5 million pounds each, some of the heaviest ever built, making the completion of this bridge truly an engineering feat.

When crews opened the new bridge to traffic, they also opened the on-ramp from South Michigan Street/East Marginal Way South to southbound SR 99. This ramp has been closed since late 1994. The old First Avenue South Bridge will remain closed for another 18 months for renovation.

The new bridge will temporarily carry two northbound and two southbound lanes of traffic, with opposing lanes separated by median barrier. In mid-1998, when construction on both bridges is complete and both are opened, each will carry three lanes of general-purpose traffic and one lane of high-occupancy-vehicle traffic. This configuration will double the capacity of the current First Avenue South bridge, but traffic lights and street capacity on the bridges' north sides will still limit the amount of traffic that can travel through the area.

Rehabilitation of the old First Avenue South bridge began as soon as the new bridge opened to traffic. This \$27 million phase of the \$200 million project includes repaving the bridge deck and constructing new bridge approaches.

### **HOV-LANE SWITCH TO LEFT COMPLETE ON I-405 NEAR RENTON**

In February, crews completed work to relocate the high-occupancy-vehicle lanes from the outside (right side) of Interstate 405 to the inside (left side) of the freeway between Renton and the I-90 interchange.

Moving the HOV lanes to the inside of the freeway was necessary to allow crews to conduct construction work in the median as part of an ongoing project that will install fiber-optic cable, closed-circuit TV cameras, ramp meters, variable-message signs and noise walls, plus widen some ramps and repave a section of the freeway. Because of weather and other constraints, it took several months to relocate the HOV lanes.

The project will have significant impacts to traffic when crews repave the freeway -- from Coal Creek Parkway to Sunset Boulevard -- alternately closing I-405 through this section, southbound one weekend, northbound the following weekend during July/August. The project is scheduled to be completed in the fall of 1998, but most of the construction activity that will impact traffic will be completed by the end of this year.

The HOV lanes will remain on the left after the project is complete as part of an overall plan to move all the HOV lanes to the inside on I-405. With the approval of the Regional Transit Authority's rail/transit proposal, the plan for I-405 includes constructing HOV direct-access ramps that will connect directly to the inside HOV lanes being built by WSDOT.

In the short-term, the HOV lanes will remain on the outside of northbound and southbound I-405 north of the I-90 interchange. A project that will move the HOV lanes to the inside between the I-90 interchange and Swamp Creek (I-5 interchange) is scheduled to be advertised for construction bids in 1999 if funding becomes available.

### **BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN PROGRAM STRUTS THEIR STUFF AT EXPO**

The WSDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Program had a display at the Greater Seattle Bicycle Expo, February 15 and 16. The Expo is the largest consumer show for bicyclists and bicycling in the country. Over 12,000 attended the show viewing exhibits from 150 vendors including bicycle retailers, manufacture's, commercial tour operators, non-profit tours, and government agencies.

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Program display featured the department's Bicycling Advisory Committee. Many questions were asked about bicycling in Washington and on state routes as well as suggestions given for improving bicycling on state highways. Thank-you's were also given for the improvements WSDOT has made.

The Bicycle Expo also hosts awards given by the Northwest Bicycle Federation to individuals and agencies that have made significant contributions to improving conditions for bicycling. This year, Phil Meany of the NW Region and past chair of WSDOT's Bicycling Advisory committee, was recognized for his dedication to the advisory committee and work to get un-boxed bicycles on Amtrak. The Northwest Region, City of Seattle, and King County Metro were recognized for their cooperation in building secure bicycle parking at the Mountlake transit stop on SR 520.

### **SAFETY OF REST AREAS REVIEWED**

In response to suggestions by members of the interdisciplinary Safety Rest Area Team, WSDOT staff conducted field visits to nine Safety Rest Areas currently identified as needing building upgrades. The Safety Rest Area team will be prioritizing Preservation projects for the '99 - '01 biennium and members felt that an independent assessment of the sites would assist them in determining how the needs of each individual site compare to the other sites. In addition to improving the consistency of data for comparative purposes, the visits provided WSDOT staff the opportunity to meet with several safety rest area attendants to discuss their needs. Several other useful suggestions for improvements were received from volunteer coffee providers and were passed on to the appropriate parties.

#### **AVIATION PREPARING FOR PUBLIC OUTREACH PROCESS**

The next step in the Aviation Policy Outreach is underway with the preparation of the public outreach process which will begin following the fourth and final meeting of the Aviation Policy Advisory Committee. The committee will discuss the draft recommendations at the next meeting which is scheduled for late March or early April. Following the "public" review and input, the final recommendations as approved by the Advisory Committee will be sent to the Transportation Commission.

#### **AVIATION DIVISION TO BEGIN MAKING UPDATES**

On February 28th 1997, the Aviation Division signed a contract with W-H Pacific to begin updating the Washington State Continuous Airport System Plan (WSCASP). The update, which will include statewide airport data collection, will be completed in July of 1997.

#### **LTC FREIGHT MOBILITY COMMITTEE WRAPPING UP WORK**

Activities surrounding the LTC's Freight Mobility Advisory Committee (FMAC) reached a crescendo in February as the Committee wrapped up its work in formal meetings and reviewed the materials which will be included in the final report to the Legislature.

The full FMAC met twice in February (2/7 & 2/14) and the FMAC Working Group also met twice (2/4 & 2/11). Much of the work of both committees centered on finalizing the list of freight mobility projects which would be recommended to the Legislature and reviewing the committee findings and recommendations.

Following an extensive process, the Committee settled on 28 high priority projects to recommend to the Legislature. The 28 projects included 10 projects and/or studies of state facilities at a total cost of \$450 million and 18 city/county/port/rail projects at a total cost of \$260 million. 1997-1999 biennium costs for the selected projects totaled over \$228 million.

The state facility projects recommended by the committee included improvements on SR 543 in Blaine, SR 397 in the Tri-Cities, the SR 519 project in Seattle, I-90 work in Spokane, SR 18 truck lanes in Peasley Canyon, and the start on construction of major capacity improvements on SR 167 in Tacoma and SR 509 in King County. Recommendations were also made for three non-construction projects--studies of Eastern Washington rail issues, alternative solutions to SR 28 problems in the Wenatchee area, and continued funding for the FAST Corridor program.

#### **NINE SITES TO BE CONSIDERED FOR PARK & RIDE**

The feasibility study on capacity and security improvements for selected park and ride sites in King County is nearing completion. Nine sites, selected by King County, are being advanced as a proposal to be considered by King County, Perini and WSDOT. The sites in priority order are: Federal Way, Eastgate, Star Lake, Kingsgate, Mercer Island, South Bellevue, Northgate, Kent-Des Moines and Tukwila. The financial strategies range from 100% public funding to 100% user fee funded, with a number of options in between.

This proposal will be presented to WSDOT Executive Management and the Transportation Commission in April. Briefings are also being planned by King County Department of Transportation for local elected officials and agencies. The proposal will also be presented to host communities in a series of public meetings that are scheduled for late spring. Following these activities, the stage one feasibility report will be complete. Discussions on whether to proceed with the project will then commence.

### **SR 16/TACOMA NARROWS ADVISORY ELECTION COMING TOGETHER**

Two public officials briefings were held in the corridor to explain the methodology that WSDOT will use in establishing the geographic boundary for the advisory election. Concern was expressed by a few individuals that some communities were more affected by the proposed project and, therefore, should be the only ones to vote. The traffic and economic modeling will begin this spring and a preliminary boundary is scheduled to be complete in Fall 1997. A local involvement committee will then be convened to provide advice to the Department on the final voting boundary and other matters pertaining to the advisory election.

Public meetings will be held in the corridor to present the results of the technical evaluation of nine alternative solutions. The meetings will also serve as public scoping meetings for the EIS. The following meetings are scheduled:

- Tuesday, March 11, Lakewood area: Clover Park High School Cafeteria, 11023 Gravelly Lake Dr. SW, Lakewood.
- Wednesday, March 12, Port Orchard area: Cedar Heights Jr. High School Commons Area, 2220 Pottery Ave., Port Orchard.
- Thursday, March 13, Key Peninsula area: Key Peninsula Civic Center, 17010 S Vaughn Road, Vaughn.
- Tuesday, March 18, Gig Harbor area: Goodman Middle School Commons Area, 3701 38<sup>th</sup> Ave. NW, Gig Harbor.
- Wednesday, March 19, Tacoma area: Truman Middle School Cafeteria, 6501 N 23<sup>rd</sup> St., Tacoma.

All meetings are scheduled from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. and will include an open house, project overview, small group discussions and wrap up. The results of this public comment will be presented to the SR 16/Tacoma Narrows Stakeholder Committee before their recommendation to the Department on which alternatives carry forward into the EIS.

### **PURCHASING MANUAL NOW ON THE INTERNET**

Olympia Service Center (OSC) Purchasing, with the expert assistance of OSC's Graphic Communications, now has the WSDOT Purchasing Manual in test mode on the Internet. Graphic Communications staff were instrumental in converting the hard copy manual to Internet format. Initial review of the Internet Manual suggests this will be a very worthwhile and useful tool for customers. Full availability of the Internet Purchasing Manual to WSDOT customers statewide is planned for the very near future.

### **ONE MAN'S JUNK, ANOTHER MAN'S TREASURE**

The Information Technology Committee (ITC) has endorsed a new process enabling disposal of surplus desktop computer equipment to public schools, K through 12. Surplus computers are fully depreciated and represent zero book value. They are below

Washington State Department of Transportation 'level playing field' standards, which means they cannot be used to conduct agency business. Although of zero business value, these computers are still useful in an educational setting. Many schools have requested surplus computers and more requests are expected as word of this process spreads. Besides extending the useful life of state resources, this process benefits Washington State Department of Transportation by expediting the disposal of obsolete equipment and reducing storage costs. A 'win-win' situation for Washington State Department of Transportation, state taxpayers and school age children.

### **VIDEO CONFERENCING GOES NATIONWIDE**

Recently, WSDOT was able to select a private contractor by a video conferencing interview that connected Detroit, Chicago, and the Olympia Service Center (OSC). This means that WSDOT can set up video conferences not only nationwide, but internationally, to conduct business. In January, a video conference connection was established at the Transportation Research Board conference in Washington D.C., permitting staff at OSC to view seminar discussions. In February, the Transportation Commission meeting was video broadcasted to four regions, including the North Central Region who recently joined the WSDOT video conferencing network.

### **NORTH CENTRAL GETTING PBX PHONE SYSTEM**

A contract has been signed to install a PBX (Private Branch Exchange) telephone system in the North Central Region this summer. At that time, the region will become part of the Washington State Department of Transportation 4 digit dialing network.

### **NEW MAINFRAME UP & RUNNING**

With concurrence from customer system managers and MIS application managers, the new mainframe (an IBM 9672-R63) was cut over to production at 7:00 p.m. on Saturday, February 1, 1997. Since going to production, no software compatibility problems have been found with the new mainframe. There was a hardware problem with a memory card on Thursday afternoon (2/6/97) which caused system outage for about an hour. IBM has since replaced the memory card.

### **REPORT REVIEWING WSDOT RAIL FREIGHT PROGRAM AVAILABLE**

Pursuant to RCW 47.76.340, a report entitled *Review of the WSDOT Rail Freight Program* has recently been published and is now available for distribution. The report was prepared for WSDOT by the consulting firm Wilbur Smith Associates. The referenced section of the RCW calls for a comprehensive review of the Freight Rail Program at the end of six years (1996). The report provides information on the background of the Freight Rail Program, program activities, Washington State's rail transportation system and a comprehensive evaluation of the program.

Among the conclusions reached by the evaluation was that almost 60 percent of the state's rail system is comprised of light density feeder lines, many of which are vulnerable to abandonment without periodic capital assistance from the Freight Rail Program. The report recommended continued funding of the Freight Rail Program to preserve essential freight rail service on Washington's rail system.

### **FEMA HIT HARD BY DAMAGED SHORT LINE RAILROADS**

The December and January storms caused approximately \$500,000 in flood related damages to Washington State's short line railroads. Some of these rail lines are owned by public agencies and can qualify for emergency FEMA grants to repair the damage.

The Port of Columbia which now owns the Walla Walla to Dayton rail line has applied for a FEMA grant to repair approximately \$54,000 in flood damages. Also seeking FEMA

assistance is the City of Tacoma to replace a washed out bridge in Centralia on the Tacoma Eastern Railway.

FEMA is a source of funds for rail lines under public ownership that can be accessed to preserve Washington's rail infrastructure during times of natural disaster. Unfortunately, privately owned short line railroads are not eligible for FEMA funding and must rely heavily upon WSDOT assistance during times of natural disaster.

#### **WHATCOM COUNTY SUPPORTS CTR PROGRAM**

The introduction of the CTR program to Whatcom County continues to move forward with strong support from all parties. On February 5, 1997, WSDOT CTR staff attended an inter-jurisdictional meeting with mayors and public works directors of all affected jurisdictions in the county. All parties expressed strong support for the program, and agreed on a set of services which the Whatcom County Council of Government (lead agency for program implementation) will provide to employers. The cities of Lynden and Blaine have passed their CTR ordinances, and Ferndale, Bellingham and Whatcom County will adopt CTR ordinances over the next several weeks. On February 18, 1997, the Bellingham Herald ran an editorial strongly supporting the CTR program and encouraging employers who are not technically affected by the law to consider participating. Recent employer focus groups held in the county found that employers are concerned about traffic congestion, energy consumption, and air pollution, and support CTR as a means of addressing these problems. The county will have a program kick off event for employers and the media on March 20th.

#### **TELECOMMUNICATION EFFORTS TAKEN SERIOUSLY BY LEGISLATURE**

The WSDOT telecommunications efforts are continuing to move forward with the Telecommunications Report to the LTC being formally delivered at a public hearing of the joint LTC on February 5. Staff from Cambridge Systematics delivered a policy report followed by a brief overview from WSDOT outlining various considerations.

The testimony was well received and a legislative working group was subsequently appointed to work cooperatively in development of legislation. Co-Chairs are Representative Shirley Hankins and Senator Jeannette Wood. LTC staff is drafting preliminary legislative language for that group's consideration. WSDOT staff expect to be involved in review and comment of that draft. We are expecting a first draft soon and anticipate that legislation will move forward this session.

#### **METRIC STANDARD PLANS PUBLISHED**

A complete new book of Metric Standard Plans has gone to the printer. There are approximately 200 plans included in this new publication which should be distributed around March 1. It will carry an April 1997 date for official use on all metric projects.

#### **WSDOT's STP PILOT PROGRAM MAKING HEADWAY**

Kathleen Davis, TransAid's Federal Program Manager, participated in an FHWA review of efficiencies in program delivery of Small Federal-Aid Programs. A "small" program is defined as one that receives less than three percent of total Federal-Aid program funding. This quality improvement review was conducted for FHWA to enhance its stewardship responsibilities and to identify exemplary practices that should be shared among the states.

WSDOT hopes to influence the next ISTEA by expanding the STP pilot program to all federal aid programs and reduce data requirements for the Federal Management Information System (FMIS).

## **TRANSAID RECEIVES \$1.04 BILLION IN DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS**

Fifty-four demonstration projects totaling approximately \$1.04 billion were submitted for Congressional funding. Local agencies submitted 27 projects totaling \$249 million, and there were 27 state projects totaling \$794 million.

TransAid sent a letter out this month stating to jurisdictions submitting demonstration projects that the Department's position will change if the House Surface Transportation Subcommittee reduces the state's future federal apportionments by the amount of demonstration funds received. As the Committee begins to craft the reauthorization of ISTEA, such a reduction has been put forth and discussed.

## **WSF TERMINAL PROJECT UPDATE**

### Vashon

The project to close the main slip for replacement of the transfer span bridge has been awarded. Construction is tentatively scheduled to start March 3, 1997. The auxiliary slip will remain open, but the terminal will not be able to accommodate two vessels at the dock at one time. A special ferry schedule will be in effect when the slip is closed.

### Southworth, Vashon Passenger Only

We continue to develop the design and hold workshops as we approach completion of the first phase of design, which is to issue a report for the legislature. In early February we presented these designs to the resource agencies to identify environmental issues. The feedback was relatively positive in that no insurmountable environmental impacts were identified.

### Bainbridge

Our work with the ferry terminal long-term improvements has been published in a DEIS that addresses the city's overall master plan. At the public hearing on January 30th, we heard concerns about the assignment of the third vessel to the Bainbridge-Seattle route that results from construction of the Jumbo Mark II's.

## **WSF PASSENGER-ONLY PROJECTS**

### Seattle Passenger Only

Replacement of the tie-up barge at the P50 passenger-only terminal was completed on February 25, 1997, and service was resumed at Pier 50 on February 26, 1997. The original eight day closure was extended three days to allow the contractor time to lengthen the fixed platform four meters because of an inconsistency on the plans. The overall closure has resulted in minimal customer complaints.

### Edmonds Passenger Loading Project

The plans for the Overhead Passenger Loading project are under final review. A motion was submitted by the Attorney General's office to dismiss the appeal for the Shoreline permit. After receiving the appellant's response, the Shoreline Hearings Board issued a summary judgment to dismiss the appeal. This will allow the permit to be granted, and the project will advertise for bids by June, 1997.

### Kingston Passenger-Only

WSF continues to develop designs and hold workshops as it approaches completion of the first phase of design, which is to issue a report to the legislature. The feedback from resource agencies has been relatively positive. Included in the study are upland transportation links to the terminal, which we have coordinated with the local transit agencies.



### **BOMB THREATS HALT WSF SERVICE TRIPS**

WSF recently received six bomb threat phone calls during the month of February--two on the 14th, two on the 23rd, and two on the 27th. All six calls indicated that it was a WSF vessel targeted by the threat. A total of 22 customer service trips were canceled because of the activities necessary to ensure the calls were hoaxes before operating the vessels. Measures are underway to improve WSF's ability to trace calls coming into public numbers.

### **CONTRACTS TO BE REVIEWED FOR DISCRIMINATION**

The Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO) is currently preparing documentation and analyzing minority utilization data on 18 contracts that a private citizen alleges violate Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The citizen alleges that the contractor administering the contracts are discriminating against minorities by denying access to employment opportunities in federally assisted contracts. Full analysis and finding will be submitted to the Federal Highway Administration by March 25, 1997.

### **QUALITY ITEMS:**

#### **SUBCOMMITTEE PURSUING QUALITY-TOOL USE**

A subcommittee of the Planning and Programming Service Center (P&PSC) Quality Steering Committee brainstormed creative ways to get the Q-tools (quality tools) into the hands of P&PSC employees. The tool criteria developed is easy to use, legible, compact, understandable, innovative, and within time/fiscal constraints. Three resulting subcommittee recommendations, approved by the Quality Steering Committee and currently being pursued, are:

- Purchase and distribute as a reference book copies of the "Memory Jogger" - a comprehensive collection of quality tools and examples - to each P&PSC office.
- Develop, publish, and distribute to all P&PSC staff a very simple Q2000 user friendly pocket guide to use in daily business.
- Personalize the SW Region Quality Refresher Course booklet to P&PSC operations, and offer the refresher training to specific office groups upon request.

A fourth proposal under consideration is to develop a P&PSC Q-tool refresher training video. The subcommittee is investigating whether any similar videos already exist within the department or on the general market, which may be appropriate to this purpose.

#### **QUALITY JOURNEY CONTINUES FOR NORTH CENTRAL REGION**

North Central Region Administrator Don Senn led a quality refresher training session for his direct reports on February 11. These managers will take this training to those who report to them. A Continuous Improvement Resource Manual was developed as a tool for the refresher training. North Central Region is continuing to progress through the Continuous Improvement Journey to Quality through active participation.

#### **QUALITY TEAMS FORMED & EAGER**

SW Region's two chartered process improvement teams have been formed. They are the Plan Quantity Accuracy team lead by Neil Francis and the Customer Service Telephone Response team lead by Gene Beardsley.

All team members have been through the Quest 2001 class. Several members have also completed the Practical Statistical Methods class. The Team Leader workshop scheduled for March 18 and 19 should complete the necessary training.

Both teams have had their first orientation meeting in which the purpose, objectives, roles & responsibilities, training requirements, problem statement, and team charter were reviewed. As team members discussed their next steps in the process they showed enthusiasm and a willingness to be involved in this effort which will hopefully inspire other employees.

### **PROJECT UTILITY PROCESS CONTROL REAPS BENEFITS**

Decisions concerning relocating utilities for a project are essentially automatic. Keeping track of each step (i.e., as-built request, relocation, agreements and Utility Object Relocation records) have been a matter of personal filing technique. However, due to an increase in projects within the last year, some projects were only being addressed when they became a crisis. The old method of keeping track was not working.

The Utilities section at that time had just put together a status report database keeping track of their franchise and permit process. The engineers working with Relocation, Railroads and Service Agreements adopted this process, and a status report evolved helping them keep track of all projects within a two-year period. Expectation dates for all steps for relocation were defined, and with a weekly meeting all crisis problems have been resolved.

The benefits have been tremendous for the design groups, which can now rely on the Utilities section addressing all utility concerns appropriately. This support group has also become more knowledgeable on all the projects within the region using this tool concerning Relocation, Railroad and Service Agreement matters.

### **PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS RESULT FROM CUSTOMER FEEDBACK**

Risk Management Manager Bill Henselman, accompanied by Assistant Attorney General Mike Nicefaro, attended the recent Association of General Contractors WSDOT Administration Team meeting to discuss construction zone tort liability, liability insurance requirements, and tort claims tender issues. The "customer" feedback to the Risk Management Office clearly identified some gaps that will be relatively easy to fix in conjunction with the Construction Administration Office and various project offices. The Risk Management Office is getting the suggested process improvements into place.

### **QUALITY TEAM RECOGNIZES VALUE OF TRAINING**

A Natural Quality Team to develop supplemental technical training for the Bridge and Structures Office staff has been formed. The team recognizes the wealth of knowledge and untapped teaching resources in the Bridge Office and is encouraging its own members to participate in continuing self-training. Training directly related to bridge design was felt to be most beneficial and that the training should be informal. Outside speakers will be invited where appropriate. A list of topics and potential presenters will be developed by April 15 and presented to management for implementation. This activity is a management action item developed during the January 1997 Bridge Engineer Supervisor's Planning Session. Implementation of this training is just another small step in the continuing development of a highly trained and professional workforce.

### **WSDOT CD-ROM SENT TO LOCAL AGENCIES**

TransAid and the Finance and Administration Service Center have completed their goal of placing nine WSDOT manuals on a CD-ROM for semi-annual routine distribution to local

agencies and others. The first disks have been distributed and include the following manuals:

- *WSDOT Construction Manual*
- *WSDOT Highway Runoff Manual*
- *Local Agency Guidelines (LAG) Manual*
- *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways (MUTCD)*
- *WSDOT Standards Specifications (English version)*
- *WSDOT Standards Specifications (Metric version)*
- *StreetWise-A Simplified Local Agency Pavement Management System/ A Guide for Local Agency Pavement Managers*
- *The Gist of GIS (Geographic Information Systems)*

Also on this disk is a selection of frequently used electronic forms, such as the *Local Agency Agreement* form and the *Planning Prospectus*. Users can access and fill in the forms and store them on their computers. In all, there are 14 forms that may be accessed.

### **OEO STAFF PUTTING QUALITY SKILLS TO WORK OUTSIDE THE OFFICE**

OEO Director Brenda Richardson was asked by FHWA to serve on an External Discrimination Complaint Procedure Work Group. The work group is charged to establish a matrix for discrimination complaints processed within FHWA and to develop administrative guidelines for processing external discrimination complaints. The guidelines to be developed will include the proper means of reporting complaints that are received by FHWA field personnel and handling of employment class action complaints and other allegations of discrimination. The guidelines will emphasize customer service and ensure timely responses. The group will be meeting at the FHWA Headquarters in Washington, D. C. on March 10-13, 1997.

### **GOOD NEWS ITEMS:**

#### **PHOTOGRAMMETRY DELIVERS NEW PRODUCT**

Photogrammetry has begun delivery of a new product called Color Digital Ortho Photos. These are being produced for the I-90 corridor from the Kingdome to I-405. Ortho photos are made from true color aerial photography and are images that have been processed with specialized software that resamples and corrects each image pixel in order to remove displacements caused by camera tilt, perspective, and terrain relief. It allows data from line maps to be combined with the photographic image in the State Plane Coordinate System. True positions, distances, and areas can be measured directly from the ortho photo image, even in areas where no "line map" type data is available.

#### **WSDOT STAFF HONORED BY GETTING "JURY MEMBER" DUTIES**

In recognition of WSDOT's Highways & Local Roadway's commitment to Washington communities, staff member Julie Mercer Matlick has been honored as a "jury member" by the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development's "Excellence in Downtown Revitalization Awards." The four member jury of revitalization peers will review nominations to evaluate projects that meet the criteria under various categories. Some of the award categories include Outstanding Public Partner, Outstanding Special Project, Best Public Improvement Project; and Best Economic Restructuring Story. The awards will be announced at the Governor's Downtown Revitalization Training Institute on March 13, 1997.

## **GRAPHIC COMMUNICATIONS AWARDED FOR OUTSTANDING SERVICE**

The Aviation Division awarded Graphic Communications with an "Award of Excellence" for 19 years of outstanding service by providing materials in a professional, timely, and attractive manner.

## **ONE-WAY AMTRAK TICKETS NOW AVAILABLE**

In late-January, Amtrak, WSDOT, ODOT, and CalTrans introduced true one-way pricing for train trips in the west. The one-way pricing is expected to increase ridership and revenue by making Amtrak more attractive to one-way travelers and making it easier for travel agents and Amtrak ticket agents to sell and exchange tickets. In addition, marketing featuring the one-way prices will help customers more easily compare travel costs.

## **HIGH SPEED RAIL FUNDS AWARDED BY USDOT**

In August, the WSDOT Rail Office applied to the USDOT for approximately \$1.5 million in ISTEA Section 1010 high speed rail funds. These funds were for two specific projects on the High Speed Rail Corridor--the Allen Street Bridge project in Kelso, and the Ostrander Flood control/crossing elimination project in Cowlitz County. After considering the request, USDOT awarded WSDOT \$1.1 million for these projects.

The ISTEA Section 1010 funds will be used with other Federal, State, and local funding in these projects to eliminate crossings, reduce roadway/railroad congestion, and improve safety on our roads and railways on the Pacific Northwest Corridor.

## **“CAiCE” CHOSEN AS NEW ROADWAY DESIGN SOFTWARE**

After an intensive technical requirement formulation process and evaluation of comments from a draft Request for Proposals (RFP) issued in August, 1996, WSDOT published and distributed a RFP for roadway design software in September. Two vendors, Intergraph and CAiCE (CAiCE--pronounced “casey”--is an acronym for Computer Aided Civil Engineering) performed benchmark testing of their products. A final evaluation was made and CAiCE was chosen to provide new roadway design software for the Department. It was developed by AGA Computer Services, Inc., of Tampa, Florida.

CAiCE training, implementation schedules, migration plans, and licensing arrangements are being developed. Designers will see a dramatic difference when using CAiCE compared to the CEAL software it replaced. The goal to select a package that is easier to use, more graphical, and follows the Microsoft Windows structure has been achieved!

## **DESIGN VISUALIZATION USED AT HEARINGS**

WSDOT's Design Visualization Unit worked with Brad Lovaas of the Legislative Transportation Committee to develop products for use at recent hearings on the Transportation Budget Bill. Design visualization products were used to illustrate unfunded projects of high public interest. Huge displays of various projects were located inside and outside of the hearing room. A design visualization video was presented during the hearings along with a live Internet demonstration. The displays and presentations were very well received. The large posters used during the hearings are now on display throughout the Olympia Service Center.

## **WSDOT TRANSAID STAFF ELECTED VICE-CHAIR OF IACC**

Kathleen Davis, TransAid's Federal Program Manager, was elected Vice-Chair of the Infrastructure Assistance Coordinating Council (IACC) and will serve for one year. The

IACC is a voluntary, non-profit organization composed of representatives of state and federal agencies and Washington associations. The Council is dedicated to assisting local communities with technical and financial assistance and provides information to assist them in meeting their infrastructure needs. Each year, the IACC publishes the *Infrastructure Assistance Directory*, which identifies a variety of grant programs with contacts and telephone numbers provided for each grant.

#### **PASSENGER-ONLY SERVICE APPLICATIONS DENIED**

On February 26th the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission granted WSF's motion to dismiss the applications of Horluck and San Juan Express to implement passenger-only service between Seattle and Bremerton, Kingston and Suquamish. Either party may appeal this decision for reconsideration.

#### **NEW FAST FERRY MAKES A SPLASH OF A DEBUT**

On February 21st and 22nd, WSF offered the Puget Sound area a preview of its new passenger only fast ferry the *Intintoli* via an afternoon cruise for media personnel, elected officials, and other VIP's. Additionally, WSF made the vessel available for citizens of Bremerton through an open house and three short cruises. Reaction to the event was outstanding.

#### **WSDOT's OEO OFFICE TO HOST CIVIL RIGHTS CONFERENCE**

Each year, one of the state DOT's in this region hosts the FHWA Region X Civil Rights Conference. This year, OEO has the Executive Management's approval to host the 1997 FHWA Region X Civil Rights Conference, which will be held at the Best Western Executive Inn in Seattle on April 29 - May 1, 1997. This year's conference theme, *Civil Rights Partnerships for the 21st Century*, exemplifies cooperation among and within agencies involved in civil rights programs. The conference will attract approximately 100-150 attendees from federal, state, local and private agencies.

#### **WSDOT'S OEO CONTINUES TO MEET DBE GOALS**

FHWA has completed their evaluation and provide approval of WSDOT's 1996 Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Update. FHWA complimented WSDOT on its positive efforts in awarding 36 prime contractors and 561 total prime and subcontracts to DBE firms. WSDOT is also commended for exceeding its FY 96 overall DBE goal of 16% by 8.47%, thus attaining a 24.47% DBE participation rate.